



Governor Warner's Initiative
to Promote Healthy Lifestyles

State Agency Coordinator Toolkit
November 2004

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Dear Agency Coordinator:

Thank you for the work you do in making our state workforce healthier through your involvement in various CommonHealth programs. Employees were able to lose 16,000 pounds – more than the combined weight of the entire roster of the Washington Redskins! – due in large part to your commitment and encouragement during the recent weight management program.

I am writing you to join me in a new initiative, *Healthy Virginians*, which will spread the word throughout the Commonwealth about common sense ideas to develop and maintain a healthy lifestyle. A key component of the campaign is the *Virginia on the Move*TM program to encourage state employees to walk an additional 40 million steps while reducing their calorie intake between now and next May. That sounds like a lot, I know, but with the right encouragement, I believe it can be done.

The great thing about the *Virginia on the Move*TM program is that it can be customized to meet individual needs. Every state agency also will have the opportunity to meet specific goals and be designated as a “Governor’s Healthy Workplace.”

There will be numerous activities for you and other coordinators, including training and the campaign kickoff in November. This guidebook will help you plan for your location’s participation in the overall program. If you have questions, or need assistance, contact your regional coordinator or call (804) 560-4500.

Again, I extend my sincere appreciation to you for the work you have already done to make our state workforce healthier. Now it is time to move to the next level. Our goals are high, but with you as a partner in the process, we are assured of success.

Sincerely,

Mark R. Warner

Campaign Background

Healthy Virginians Initiative

This kit is being provided to help encourage the integration of health and physical activity into the work culture of state employees as part of the Governor's initiative to promote healthy lifestyles. Depending upon the level of activity of the state agency and employees, participating locations will be designated a "Governor's Healthy Workplace" by the Governor with appropriate recognition.

Research shows that walking an extra 2,000 steps and eating 100 fewer calories each day is sufficient to stop the average weight gain of one to three pounds per year. Through increasing physical activity and cutting calories, many public and private sector employees could significantly improve their health and reduce their risk of early death or disability.

Virginians

The overall health of Virginians is increasingly at risk. A growing incidence of obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular disease is impacting quality of life, life expectancy and the cost of health care. Too many Virginians smoke, eat too many calories from fat, are overweight and do not exercise. The Kaiser Family Foundation reported in 2001-02 that:

- 20.0% of Virginians are obese
- 56.4% of Virginians are overweight and obese
- 24.5% of Virginians currently smoke
- 23.0% of Virginians engage in no physical leisure time activity
- 4.5% of Virginians are reported to have diabetes

State Employees

State employees are reflecting these same trends, particularly as the state workforce ages. Lifestyle-related conditions represent about 35% of all inpatient hospital costs for the state health benefits program, and 45% of those cases relate to heart disease.

A state analysis during fiscal 2004 of more than 8,300 participants in health assessments for risk from early death or disability shows that the top five risk factors for state employees are:

- 35% lack exercise
- 20% smoke
- 12% have high blood pressure
- 11% have high cholesterol
- 10% have low levels of good cholesterol

Who is Eligible

All state employees may participate in the *Healthy Virginians* initiative. However, there are various components of the program that have differing eligibility criteria. Please contact the Department of Human Resource Management with any questions about who is eligible.

Open to All State Employees

The following programs may be offered to all employees, including salaried employees, those who have waived coverage in the state health benefits program and wage employees.

- ***Virginia on the Move™***

A new program that promotes lifelong physical activity and healthy eating. Participants will receive a step counter and have access to the *America on the Move™* Web site to log their steps. Pre and post assessments will be available for employees to complete online. Participation in these assessments is vital to insuring that we meet our campaign goals and make a difference in the health of employees. This assessment is strictly confidential.

Open to Employees Eligible for the Health Benefits Program

The programs below are offered through CommonHealth as part of the state health benefits program. Eligibility is limited to COVA Care and Kaiser Permanente HMO health plan members and those who have waived coverage.

- ***Minutes Matter***

A CommonHealth program that emphasizes the signs and symptoms of heart attack and stroke, the action steps to take if a person has a heart attack or stroke, as well as prevention. Participants receive the *Mayo Clinic Guide to Self-Care* and the *Cardiac CareKit*.

- ***CommonHealth Education Programs and Challenges***

A number of different education programs and challenges may be offered to employees during the *Healthy Virginians* initiative. The goal of these challenges will be to start, continue or increase activity daily or to improve dietary choices.

Campaign Goals

These goals will be accomplished in partnership with the Department of Human Resource Management, Virginia Department of Health, American Heart Association, the Virginia Tech-sponsored *Virginia on the Move™* initiative and Health Management Corporation.

- **Education.** Increase the understanding healthy eating and moderate physical activity can substantially reduce the risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, and obesity.
- **Exercise.** Provide employees with opportunities to continue exercising through the winter months into spring, and distribute step counters to measure employee physical activity.
- **Environment.** Make the workplace a supportive environment for health and daily physical activity.
- **Employee Recognition.** Recognize state agencies that are a “Governor’s Healthy Workplace” as well as individual employees.

This campaign includes a variety of activities designed to help employees become more active and improve overall health. Each component of the campaign plays in integral part in meeting the goals listed above.

- **Education**

- **Communication**

- The *CommonHealth Compass*, a quarterly wellness newsletter for State and TLC employees, will have articles in support of the campaign in fall, winter and spring issues.
 - The *Spotlight*, a semiannual health benefits newsletter for State employees, will support the campaign with articles on disease management and other health education.
 - The *Commonwealth Currents*, a quarterly online State employee newspaper, will support the campaign by highlighting the achievements of agencies and employees.
 - Online material will be available from multiple Web sites such as the Governor’s homepage, Department of Human Resource Management, CommonHealth, Virginia Department of Health, Virginia Tech and American Heart Association.

- **CommonHealth Online Health Assessment**

Pre and post assessments will be available for employees to complete online. Participation in these assessments is vital to insuring that we meet our campaign goals and make a difference in the health of employees. This assessment is strictly confidential. Employees who complete both the pre- and post-assessments will be eligible to participate in a grand prize drawing at the end of the campaign.

- **Minutes Matter**

Minutes Matter is a CommonHealth program that emphasizes the signs and symptoms of heart attack and stroke, the action steps to take if a person has a heart attack or stroke, as well as prevention. Participants receive the *Mayo Clinic Guide to Self-Care* and the *Cardiac CareKit*.

- ***Challenges Involving Healthy Food Choices***

The goal of various challenges offered to employees from January to April will include improving dietary choices.

- **Exercise**

- ***Virginia on the Move™***

Virginia on the Move™ is a new program that promotes lifelong physical activity and healthy eating. Participants in this program will receive a step counter and access to the *America on the Move™* Web site to log their steps. Participants who register can easily log their steps and receive daily e-mails with health and fitness information.

- ***Challenges and Healthy Competition***

A number of different challenges will be offered to employees during a four-month period (January – April). The goal of these challenges will be to start, continue or increase activity daily.

- **Environment**

- ***Walk Breaks***

As part of this campaign, agencies are encouraged to support 15-minute walk breaks during the workday as well as other campaign related activities.

- **Employee Recognition**

- ***Rewards and Recognition Program***

Appropriate reward and recognition levels will be determined. Agencies will incorporate the “Governor’s Healthy Workplace” designation into their Agency Reward and Recognition Program.

- ***Recognition Certificates and Drawing***

Employees will be recognized for their efforts to become healthier during the campaign. Employees completing the pre- and post-online health assessments will receive recognition certificates and be eligible for a grand prize drawing. Challenge incentive drawings will also be awarded.

Participation Levels and Rewards

You can make a difference and get Virginians on the move! As the Agency Coordinator, you can help schedule on-site programs, encourage management support, promote fitness activities at your location and integrate health into the work culture. The more you do, the more **active** your workplace will become.

Agencies will be recognized and rewarded for their efforts. Governor Warner will recognize agencies that achieve the “Governor’s Healthy Workplace” status based on Gold, Silver and Bronze levels of achievement. These agencies will be awarded a signed certificate during Virginia Public Service Week.

Additionally, employees will be recognized for their efforts through completion certificates, campaign prize drawings and success stories.

Bronze Award

- Encourage 15-minute walk break during the workday
- Promote the campaign (posters, emails, flyers)
- Schedule the *Virginia on the MoveTM* program with your CommonHealth Regional Coordinator
- Achieve agency employee participation goal (see chart on next page)
- Ensure distribution of the CommonHealth *Compass* newsletters
- Complete Agency Coordinator campaign evaluation

Silver Award

- Encourage 15-minute walk break during the workday
- Promote the campaign (posters, emails, flyers)
- Schedule the *Virginia on the MoveTM* program
- Achieve agency employee participation goal (see chart on next page)
- Ensure distribution of the CommonHealth *Compass* newsletters
- Complete Agency Coordinator campaign evaluation
- Schedule an education program with your CommonHealth Regional Coordinator (see CommonHealth Education Programs page)
- Implement one CommonHealth campaign challenge (see CommonHealth Challenges page)

Gold Award

- Encourage 15-minute walk break during the workday
- Promote the campaign (posters, emails, flyers)
- Schedule the *Virginia on the MoveTM* program
- Achieve agency employee participation goal (see chart on next page)
- Ensure distribution of the CommonHealth *Compass* newsletters
- Complete Agency Coordinator campaign evaluation
- Schedule an education program with your CommonHealth Regional Coordinator (see CommonHealth Education Programs page)
- Implement two CommonHealth campaign challenges (see CommonHealth Challenges page)
- Agency head, managers and supervisors perform all items on checklist (see Step One page)
- Promote and participate in a community walk or implement an agency wide charity walk
- Promote healthy eating options

Agency Employee Participation Levels			
Agency Size	Gold Award	Silver Award	Bronze Award
1-50	70%	60%	50%
51-250	50%	40%	30%
251-1000	45%	35%	30%
1001-3000	40%	30%	25%
3001-8000	35%	30%	20%
8001+	30%	25%	20%

Steps to Success

Agency Support

A. Agency Managers

The support of your agency's leadership is essential for campaign success. Encourage your agency manager to complete the activities on the checklist below.

Agency Manager Checklist

- _____ Write a letter or e-mail of support for the campaign and distribute to employees. Describe personal goal, agency goal and importance to the agency.
- _____ Allow agency employees 15 minutes on the clock each day to participate in a walk during the campaign.
- _____ Participate in the campaign events and wear the step counter.
- _____ Work with the Agency Coordinator to insure a successful campaign and the achievement of the agency's goal.
- _____ Give the CommonHealth Agency Coordinator at your location feedback about agency campaign involvement.
- _____ Use the Recognition and Rewards program at your agency to thank CommonHealth Agency Coordinators based on their performance efforts.

B. Advisory Committee

Enlist support from your CommonHealth Advisory Committee. Ask members to assist with the campaign responsibilities to help your agency reach its campaign goals.

Steps to Success

Monthly Calendar

All of the tools and resources you need for a successful campaign are at your fingertips. Follow the steps outlined below to plan and promote a successful campaign at your agency.

November

- The first step in the campaign is to encourage employees to complete the CommonHealth online Health Assessment. Once they have completed the assessment, participants will print off a confirmation page including a letter from Governor Warner supporting their efforts and a pledge card to help them commit to moving more and eating less. The online pre-assessment will be available until mid-January.
- Encourage employees in the Richmond area to get moving with Governor Warner in the campaign kick-off event on **November 9th in downtown Richmond**. Participants will sign their pledge cards and walk with the Governor to get the campaign off on the right foot.
- Develop your own event using the tips shown in Step Three or other creative ideas. Work with your CommonHealth Regional Coordinator to plan and promote the event(s).
- Schedule the *Virginia on the Move™* program with your CommonHealth Regional Coordinator. Participants will receive a step counter and will be encouraged to wear it and track their steps throughout the campaign. Remind participants to log their steps online as instructed in the program. **Note:** *Participants must bring the confirmation page showing they completed the CommonHealth online Health Assessment to participate.*
- Map out a one-mile course at or near your agency, distribute the course to employees and encourage them to increase their steps per day.

December

- Consider scheduling challenges or programs related to the holidays, such as the Turkey Trot or Maintain, Don't Gain. See the CommonHealth Web site for more challenge ideas.
- Send campaign specific e-mail messages to employees at your agency reminding them of campaign events and encouraging their participation.

January

- Ensure distribution of the winter issue of *The Compass* newsletter to employees at your agency. Remind employees that it will also be available on the CommonHealth Web site.

- Encourage employees to complete *The Compass* challenge available in the winter issue. Collect challenge cards and send to your CommonHealth regional coordinator to enter employees in the challenge incentive drawing.

February

- *Minutes Matter* – Schedule the Minutes Matter program with your CommonHealth Regional Coordinator. Participants will receive the *Mayo Clinic Guide to Self-Care* and the *Cardiac CareKit* to help them learn the signs and symptoms of heart attack and stroke and improve self-care practices. This program can also extend into March if necessary.

March

- Implement the spring heart healthy challenge at your agency. Distribute challenge cards, encourage participation, collect cards and return them to your CommonHealth Regional Coordinator for incentives.

April

- Ensure distribution of the spring issue of *The Compass* newsletter to employees at your agency. Remind employees that it will also be available on the CommonHealth Web site.
- Implement the agency step competition challenge at the beginning of the month. Pick another state agency or department to compete with during this two-week challenge.
- The final step in the campaign is to encourage employees to complete the post CommonHealth online Health Assessment. Once they have completed the assessment and campaign evaluation questions, participants can print off a recognition certificate for their efforts. Employees who have completed both the pre- and post-assessments will participate in a grand prize drawing.

May

- During Public Service Week, the Governor will recognize those state agencies that have achieved the “Governor’s Healthy Workplace” designation and award certificates to the appropriate agency coordinators or CommonHealth administrators.
- National Employee Health & Fitness Day – This event will take place on May 18. Promote this event at your agency and encourage all employees to participate and wear their step counters. This will be the final group event of the campaign.

Steps to Success

Special Events

There are many ways you can increase your campaign's visibility and "fun factor." Try something new with special event ideas like these:

- Turkey Trot – pick a day before Thanksgiving to host a walk at your agency. Participants can donate a dollar and the money collected can go towards prize drawings, refreshments for the end of the walk or be donated to a charity.
- Bring local charities and health-related organizations to your location to participate in a health fair for employees.
- New Year, New You – Kick off the New Year with a group walk and encourage participants to continue with their own walking club at work.
- Walk-opoly – Design a game where participants walk around a city block stopping at various "properties." The participant that reaches all of the properties first wins a prize.
- Research a community/charity walk in your area and encourage employees to participate.
- Have a healthy potluck lunch – Recruit employees to share their time, cooking talents and recipes and have a healthy lunch for employees. Assign judges and offer prizes for the dishes that taste great, but are low in calories, fat or sodium.
- Participate in National Employee Health and Fitness Day in May! Encourage employees to get out, get some fresh air and go for a walk. National Employee Health & Fitness Day is a national health observance, created to promote the benefits of physical activity for employees through their worksites. This year, the event will take place on May 18 and employees across Virginia will be joining in the fun. All agencies are encouraged to participate on this day, as it will be the final big event of the campaign.

National Employee Health & Fitness Day materials will be available in the early spring on the CommonHealth Web site.



Do you have any fun and creative ideas for special events that you would like to share? Visit the CommonHealth Web site to submit your great ideas.

Rewards and Recognition

As the campaign comes to the end of the road, there are a few final steps that need to be taken to ensure campaign success.

- Remind participants to complete the post CommonHealth online Health Assessment, which includes the campaign evaluation questions.
- Submit the Agency Coordinator reporting form on activities completed during the campaign for recognition of the Gold/Silver/Bronze “Governor’s Healthy Workplace” designation.
- Complete the Agency Coordinator evaluation (available at May/June CommonHealth bimonthly meetings or through e-mail for those that can not attend).
- Governor Warner designates Gold, Silver and Bronze level agencies as “Governor’s Healthy Workplaces” during Virginia Public Service Week and gives out signed certificates and appropriate rewards.

CommonHealth Education Programs

More information on the following programs may be found on the CommonHealth Web site. Please coordinate activities with your CommonHealth Regional Coordinator.

- Minutes Matter -- Provides participants with the appropriate skills and resources to improve self-care practices and reduce their risk of cardiovascular disease.
- Have A Ball With Fitness -- Beginning exercisers learn how to push, dip, twist, crunch, squat and lunge with the added fun of a ball.
- Spirit of Stretching -- Participants will learn the concepts of stretching and use a Stretch Strap to improve flexibility.
- Exercise Classes -- There may be a new class or exercise classes already available in your area, such as aerobics or weight training.
- Good to Go -- Participants are taught to use nutrition and weight maintenance as the top decision making factors when eating on the run.
- Maximizing Your Metabolism -- By learning the effects of exercise and diet on metabolism, participants will be able to develop a plan to maintain or improve their metabolic rate.
- Power Foods -- Hear about the ten foods that deliver much more than just calories, vitamins and minerals.
- Recipe for Health -- By using simple cooking methods and substitutions, participants are taught to modify recipes to use healthy fats, increase nutrition and enhance flavor.

CommonHealth Challenges

More information on the following challenges may be found on the CommonHealth Web site. Please coordinate activities with your CommonHealth Regional Coordinator.

- Rev Up Your Engines -- Boost metabolism by incorporating muscle-building exercises into the weekly routine.
- Stair Climbing Challenge -- Take the stairs to heart health and walk up 200 flights during a month.
- The Pressure is On -- Encourages participants to complete a variety of activities to help lower blood pressure by completing 15 activities during a three week period.
- Get Balanced -- Well-balanced healthy individuals participate in this 30-day challenge and complete three activities from each section of the “wellness wheel”.
- Turkey Trot -- Participants receive a point for walking a mile in 15 minutes, and the challenge is met when they earn 24 points over the course of four weeks.
- Gimme Five Challenge -- Reduce the risk of cancer and heart disease by eating five servings of fruit and vegetables a day.
- Maintain, Don’t Gain -- Encourage participants to gain no more than two pounds between Thanksgiving and the New Year.
- Sugar Showdown -- Since excess sugar contributes to an increased risk of diabetes, tooth decay and weight gain, this challenge helps participants to cut back on added sugar.
- Water Drinking -- By drinking six 8-ounce glasses of water a day for 18 days during s one-month, participants can help avoid excess body fat, digestive problems, joint and muscle soreness, and water retention.

Web Resources

The following resources will be available as the campaign progresses.

- Governor Warner's Web Site – www.governor.virginia.gov
- Department of Human Resource Management – www.dhrm.virginia.gov
- CommonHealth – www.chp-online.com/commonhealth
- Virginia Department of Health – www.vdh.virginia.gov
- America on the Move™ – www.americaonthemove.org
- American Heart Association – www.americanheart.org
- Health Management Corporation – www.choosehmc.com
- The Mayo Clinic – www.mayoclinic.com

Tips from the Trenches

A key component of this initiative's success is sharing creative ideas that have worked well to promote it at individual agencies. Here are some early suggestions:

- When implementing the *Virginia on the Move*™ program, consider setting up teams within your agency to challenge each other. At the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles, approximately 200 employees, or 25 percent, signed up in the headquarters building. One hundred forty employees created 35 teams and about 70 joined as individuals. Signposts and recognition were given along the way. This included posting “road signs” indicating the number of steps to different floors and departments, and also team photos of achievements during the program.
- If scheduling CommonHealth events during the workday is a challenge, remember that there is flexibility in how to offer education programs and challenges. Rather than one lunch session, you may want to schedule a couple of 15-minute programs throughout the week, just long enough for a break during the day. Contact your CommonHealth Regional Coordinator for more ideas on how to incorporate CommonHealth events at your agency.
- One of the Regional Coordinators in the Roanoke area presented the “Have A Ball” program prior to a scheduled fitness class at the agency. She encouraged everyone to stay and try the aerobics class also. Most participants did stay for the aerobics class and said the “Have A Ball” program was a great warm up for the class.
- At the Virginia Retirement System, a learning station (table top display set up for 1-2 hours) was used along with a 45-minute program for the *Minutes Matter* program on cardiovascular health. While 54 people attended the long program, another 54 stopped by the learning station for information. The CommonHealth Web site has information on which programs offer a learning station or other options in presenting programs.

Additional tips will be added as they are received. Send your comments or helpful hints to healthy.virginians@dhrm.virginia.gov.